

OPINION

FRIDAY • 10.22.10 • PAGE A6

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Zion study

Utah's national parks are filled with dramatic scenic views and some of the best hiking trails in the entire world. Zion National Park, it could be argued, is the jewel in an entire crown of natural wonders.

But national parks also can be dangerous places because of natural hazards that demand visitors' respect.

Those hazards are the focus of a new study about Zion published by the Utah Geologic Survey. The main goal of the study is to assist park managers as they map out the future of Zion.

The study focused on high-use areas of the park — Zion and Kolob canyons, Kolob Terrace and the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway corridor. The findings provided the basis of maps that show areas subject to flooding, rock falls, landslides and erosion, among other hazards. The plan is for park managers to use the information as they plan out improvements in an effort to keep the more than 2.5 million visitors each year to Zion safe.

Unfortunately, the hazards noted in the study

have caused injuries and deaths. Eight people have died from flooding since 1950. Rock falls have killed three more. And heavy rains with the corresponding run-off and debris flows have damaged park facilities numerous times over the years.

On a much rarer — yet unforgettable — scale, Zion officials also must consider the possibility of an earthquake. Many geologic experts note that a magnitude 6.5 to 7.0 earthquake is possible in the area, so improvements in the park also must take into account the possibility of collapsible soils as well as significant rock slides.

The study will allow park officials to plan where to place new amenities and how those features should be constructed. Those same officials also will have a much better idea of areas within Zion National Park that are more susceptible to damage than others.

All of those factors, when placed together, should make Zion as safe as possible to enjoy some of this world's most amazing natural wonders.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fluoride in water would benefit many

As a retired dentist, my life experience is an example of why fluoride is beneficial. I was born in Logan in 1929. At that time there was no such thing as fluoride in the water, unless it occurred naturally. At an early age I started getting cavities. Due to the Depression and money being tight I was losing my teeth.

My children could have inher-

with securing our borders not just to illegal immigrants but to terrorists as well, because they want reform on their terms only. That would include a 20 million to 30 million people increase to health care we can't afford, not to mention the drain on other public services, additional welfare, rewarding law breaking and their favorite, up to 30 million new Democratic voters.

John Williams, ST. GEORGE